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SUBJECT: DPM ZOUBAI ON SUNNI PARTICIPATION AND IRANIAN
INFLUENCE

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Daniel Speckhard for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

[11](#). (C) SUMMARY: On June 10, DCM Speckhard met with Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Salam Zoubai. The DPM bemoaned the continued marginalization of Sunni leaders within the political process, citing specific problems his office has faced in gaining access to allocated funds. The DPM warned about the dangers of increasing Iranian influence noting the result would be the imposition of a strict religious ideology on the political process. END SUMMARY.

DPM Bemoans Sunni Marginalization within the GOI

[12](#). (C) DPM Zoubai initiated discussions by describing a lack of Government of Iraq (GoI) commitment and by lamenting restrictions to rebuilding Iraq. He stated that "time is working against us." Zoubai assured the DCM that although the GoI possesses the capacity, restrictions have been imposed upon the government, and these restrictions hinder the government's ability to accomplish work. For example, DPM Zoubai's office is officially allocated 20 billion ID from the GoI budget to fund administrative requirements. However, his accountant has been denied access to the money by the Prime Minister's Office.

[13](#). (C) DPM Zoubai vigorously suggested a conscious effort by the GoI to limit Sunni participation to the periphery. The DPM provided several specific examples, including the MoI's recently proposed reorganization and the GoI's delegation to the United Arab Emirates which both greatly limited Sunni involvement. The DPM concluded by stating, "Prime Minister Maliki does not empower Sunni politicians." The DCM responded that the USG is similarly concerned about Sunni participation within the political process, but equally disturbed by recent efforts of Sunni outsiders to disrupt the national unity government. The DCM reiterated the need for the GoI to move forward with issues that unite the people of Iraq.

DPM Warns of the Dangers of Iranian Interference

[14](#). (C) Zoubai cautioned DCM Speckhard that the increased GoI relationship with Iran is dangerous and described a new GoI security agreement with the Iranian government. (NOTE: specific details of the security agreement were not mentioned. END NOTE) DPM Zoubai also ominously warned that an American loss in Iraq would result in greater Iranian influence and imposition of strict religious ideology.

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